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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
097171,432	11/23/98	FIELDS H	03063-023105

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EXAMINER
BRUMBACK, B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1642	

DATE MAILED: 05/09/00

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/171,432

Applicant(s)

Fields et al.

Examiner

Brenda Brumback

Group Art Unit

1642

☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____

☐ This action is FINAL.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 1 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claims

☒ Claim(s) 69-76 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

☒ Claims 69-76 are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been

☐ received.

☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.

☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

☐ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

— SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES —

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DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1. In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in response to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claims 1 and 69, drawn to immunogenic HAV VP4/VP2 peptides.

Group II, claims 70-73, drawn to immunogenic HAV VP3/VP1 peptides.

Group III, claims 74 and 75, drawn to methods of detecting antibodies against HAV.

Group IV, claims 76 and 77, drawn to methods of differentiating between vaccine induced and natural immunity.

2. An international and a national stage application shall relate to one invention only or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept ("requirement of unity of invention"). Where a group of inventions is claimed in an application, the requirement of unity of invention shall be fulfilled only when there is a technical relationship among those inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding special technical features. An international or a national stage application containing claims to different categories of invention will be

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considered to have unity of invention if the claims are drawn only to one of the following combinations of categories: (1) a product and a process specially adapted for the manufacture of said product; or (2) a product and a process of use of said product; or (3) a product, a process specially adapted for the manufacture of the said product, and a use of the said product; or (4) a process and an apparatus or means specifically designed for carrying out the said process; or (5) a product, a process specially adapted for the manufacture of the said product, and an apparatus or means specifically designed for carrying out the said process. If multiple products, processes of manufacture or uses are claimed, the first invention of the category first mentioned in the claims of the application and the first recited invention of each of the other categories related thereto will be considered as the main invention in the claims, see PCT Article 17(3)(a) and 1.476(c).

The inventions listed as Groups I-IV do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons. Claims of the first mentioned group (Group I, claims 1 and 69) are directed to a peptide immunogen comprising amino acid sequences similar to the VP4 and VP2 proteins of HAV. Thomas et al. (WO 94/11460; of record in paper #6) teach peptides which are similar to the VP2 and VP4 proteins of HAV (see the abstract, and page 2, lines 29-34). Since the definition of "special technical feature" is that which defines a contribution the claimed invention makes over the prior art, and the peptides of Group I are taught in the prior art, Group I does not meet the requirement for having a special technical

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feature. Furthermore, the claims of Group II (70-73) do not share the same feature, as they are drawn to peptides comprising amino acid sequences similar to the VP1, VP3, P2A, P2B, P2C, P3A, P3B, and P3C proteins of HAV. Additionally, the methods recited in Groups III and IV are methods of use of groups of peptides which do not correspond in scope with either Group I or Group II.

3. This application contains claims directed to more than one species of the generic invention. These species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

The species are as follows:

Sequences similar to a portion of the HAV VP2/VP4 protein.

Sequences similar to a portion of the HAV VP3 protein.

Sequences similar to a portion of the HAV VP1 protein.

Sequences similar to a portion of the HAV P2A protein.

Sequences similar to a portion of the HAV P2B protein.

Sequences similar to a portion of the HAV P2C protein.

Sequences similar to a portion of the HAV P3A protein.

Sequences similar to a portion of the HAV P3B protein.

Sequences similar to a portion of the HAV P3C protein.

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Applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single species to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The reply must also identify the claims and sequence identifiers (SEQ ID NOs) readable on the elected species, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered non-responsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

5. The following claims are generic: claims 1, 70-72, 74, and 76.
6. The species listed above do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, the species lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: The peptides of the different viral proteins have different structures, different functions in the virus, and different immunological properties; thus it follows that peptides which bind to antibodies which are specifically immunoreactive with the different peptides also would have different structures, different functions, and different immunological properties.

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7. Due to the complexity of the claims, the restriction requirement has been made in written form. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37

CFR 1.143).

8. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a petition under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brenda Brumback whose telephone number is (703) 306-3220. If the examiner can not be reached, inquiries can be directed to Supervisory Patent Examiner Anthony Caputa whose telephone number is (703) 308-3995. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196. Papers related to this application may be submitted to Group 1600 by facsimile transmission. Papers should be faxed to Examiner Brenda Brumback, Art Unit 1642 and should be marked "OFFICIAL" for entry into prosecution history or "DRAFT" for consideration by the examiner without entry. The Art Unit 1642 FAX telephone number is (703)-305-3014. FAX machines will be available to receive transmissions 24 hours a day. In compliance with 1096 OG 30, the filing date accorded to each OFFICIAL fax transmission will be determined by the FAX machine's stamped date found on the last page of the transmission, unless that date is a Saturday, Sunday or Federal Holiday with the District of Columbia, in which case the OFFICIAL date of receipt will be the next business day.

BB

May 8, 2000


Brenda Brumback,
Patent Examiner